

# Media, Memory, and History

Department of Media, Culture, and Communication

MCC-GE 2135

Fall 2020

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Office hours: zoom/phone by appointment

Class on Zoom, Thursdays 2-4

## Course Description:

Visual culture and memory studies have emerged over the last few decades as interdisciplinary, global fields of study. These fields intersect in important ways, drawing on cultural studies, media studies, trauma studies, and architecture/design with visuality and images playing a key role in memory culture. As we have seen in particular over the last year, sites of memory can be deeply political, with debates and battles in the US over the removal and destruction of monuments. Memory is thus a key site where concepts of national identity, human rights, and heritage are mediated and disputed.

This course examines theories of memory in relation to global visual culture, looking in particular at the intersections of memory with media forms such as film and television, photography, art, architecture, and design. We will look at the foundational concepts of cultural memory and at technologies of memory, critical visuality, artistic engagements with memory, and memory's remediation in digital media.

The course will address questions such as: What role has the photograph played in concepts of modern history? How are historical narratives told through the media of film and television? What issues are raised by the form of the historical docudrama? How is cultural memory produced and circulated through television and film and photography? What is the difference between history and cultural memory? How cultural memory is experienced through aesthetics, how artists are engaging with memory, and the interrelationship of media forms with the politics of memory will be our primary focuses.

## Course Requirements:

Our work this semester is taking place in a very unusual context of crisis and upheaval, and the course will be structured to accommodate our strange new normal and subject to ongoing evaluation and adjustment. We may have a few in-person/with remote sessions if possible. Otherwise, zoom will be our format, and the class will focus on asynchronous participation (in the form of a class blog) and synchronous participation in

zoom. In some weeks, there will be material posted for independent viewing. It is important each week to do the reading and independent viewing before Thursday's class. Our online session will be a maximum of 1.5 hours total.

Students are required to attend all seminars, to undertake the reading assignments seriously, to blog each week, and to write two papers. Readings will be prioritized each week, so that some readings will be assigned to all, and some will be reported on to the class by students. Each week 2-3 students will be assigned to bring questions to class for discussion or to report on an additional reading. Students will do 2-3 reports on reading, one short paper mid-semester of 5-7 pages, and one more in-depth research paper, 8-10 pages, by the end of the semester. Grades will consider class participation including reading reports 20%, class blog 30%, and paper 1 20%, paper 2 30%.

### **Required Texts:**

Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus* (Pantheon, 1996)  
All other readings are posted in pdf on NYU Classes.

### **Academic Integrity:**

Academic integrity is the guiding principle for all that you do, from taking exams, making oral presentations to writing term papers. It requires that you recognize and acknowledge information derived from others, and take credit only for ideas and work that are yours. You violate the principle of academic integrity when you cheat on an exam, submit the same work for two different courses without prior permission from your professors, receive help on a take-home examination that calls for independent work, or plagiarize.

When taking this class, you enter into a contract that states that all the work you are turning in has been your own and no one else's, and that you have not turned in any work for which you have received credit in another class, and that you have properly cited other people's work and ideas. Do not take this policy lightly! Violations of this policy will result in a failing grade in the course. If you have questions about these policies, or proper citation of scholarship, please come speak with me in person. (see [http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic\\_integrity](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity))

### **Student Resources**

- Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.
- Writing Center (Washington Square): 411 Lafayette, 4th Floor. Schedule an appointment online at <https://nyu.mywconline.com> or just walk-in.

## **MCC's Writing Program**

MCC's Writing Coach, Dr. Kari Hensley, is here to support grad students in the writing and revising process. You are encouraged to make an appointment with her whether you are interested in refining your voice or are struggling to find it. Through individual sessions, she can work with you on papers, thesis/dissertations, conference papers, cover letters, and more. For more info and to make an appointment, visit: <https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/mcc/masters/writing>

## **Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1—September 3 2-3:30 Class on Zoom**  
**Introduction**

**Screening: History and Memory**

**Week 2—September 10**  
**Theorizing Memory**

**Before class: watch short lecture on concepts of memory**

Reading:

Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History" (excerpt)  
Sigmund Freud, "A Note Upon the Mystic Writing Pad" (excerpt)  
Maurice Halbwachs, "The Collective Memory" (excerpt)  
Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories*, Introduction  
Andreas Huyssen, "Present Pasts"  
Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, excerpts  
Bill Schwarz, "Memory, Temporality, Modernity" (excerpt)

**Week 3—September 17**  
**Modernity and Visual Technologies**

Reading:

Anne Friedberg, "The Mobilized and Virtual Gaze in Modernity"  
Ben Singer, "Modernity, Hyperstimulus, and the Rise of Popular Sensationalism"  
Vanessa Schwartz, "Public Visits to the Morgue"  
Wolfgang Schivelbush, "Panoramic Travel" (excerpt)  
Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look* (Introduction)  
Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies* (Introduction and Chapter 2)

#### **Week 4—September 24**

##### **Photography and Memory**

Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (sections 1-5, 10-13, 19-21, 25-28, 36, 39-40)

Marianne Hirsch, "Introduction" to *Family Frames*

Leo Spitzer, "The Album and the Crossing"

Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer, "School Photos and Their Afterlives"

Geoffrey Batchen, *Forget Me Not* (pp. 8-25, 61-64, 94-98)

#### **Week 5—October 1**

##### **Cinema, Memory, and the Docudrama**

Reading:

Hayden White, "The Modernist Event"

Marita Sturken, "Reenactment, Fantasy and the Paranoia of History"

Susannah Radstone, "Cinema and Memory"

Alison Landsberg, Introduction to *Prosthetic Memory*

#### **Week 6—October 8**

##### **The Image Icon**

Reading:

Barbie Zelizer, *About to Die*, Chapter 1

Marita Sturken, *Tourists of History*, chapter 4

Ulric Neisser and Nicole Harsch, "Phantom Flashbulbs"

Robert Harriman and John Lucaites, *No Caption Needed*, Chapter 7

Marianne Hirsch, "Surviving Images"

#### **Week 7—October 15**

##### **Memory, Mass Culture and Digital Remediation**

Reading:

Alison Landsberg, *Engaging the Past*: Introduction and "Chapter 3: Encountering Contradiction: Reality History TV"

Andrew Hoskins, "Memory of the Multitude: The End of Collective Memory"

Annelot Prins, "Live Archiving the Crisis: Instagram, Cultural Studies, and Times of Collapse"

Ana Migowski and Willian Araujo, "Looking Back at Personal Memories on Facebook"

##### ***First Paper Due***

## **Week 8—October 22**

### **Sites of Trauma and Detention**

#### **Reading:**

Jens Andermann, "Returning to the Site of Horror: On the Reclaiming of Clandestine Concentration Camps in Argentina"

Diana Taylor, "Trauma as Durational Performance"

Viet Nguyen, "On Powerful Memory" from *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War*

Harry Harootunian, "Reflections from Fukushima: History, Memory, and the Crisis of Contemporaneity"

Brigitte Sion, Introduction to *Death Tourism* and "Conflicting Sites of Memory Post-Genocide Cambodia"

Gonzalo Conte, "A Topography of Memory: Reconstructing the Architectures of Terror in the Argentine Dictatorship"

## **Week 9—October 29**

### **The Politics of Memorials**

#### **Reading:**

Marita Sturken, "The Wall, The Screen, and the Image" from *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*

Viet Nguyen, "On Remembering One's Own" from *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War*

James Young, "The Memorial Arc: Between Berlin's Denkmal and New York City's 9/11 Memorial" and "Memory, Counteremory, and the End of Monument"

Vicki Kwon, "The Sonyōsang Phenomenon: Nationalism and Feminism Surrounding the Comfort Women Statue"

Katherine Hite, *Politics and the Art of Commemoration*, excerpts

Jonathan Bach, "The Wall After the Wall"

## **Week 10—November 5**

### **The Memory Museum**

#### **Reading:**

Marita Sturken, "The Objects that Lived, the Voices that Remain: The 9/11 Museum"

Amy Sodaro, "Memorial Museums: The Emergence of a New Form" and "Kigali Genocide Memorial Center" from *Exhibiting Atrocity: Memorial Museums and the Politics of Past Violence*

Orphan Pamuk, "The Innocence of Objects"

Katherine Hite, "Revisiting the Cold War through 21<sup>st</sup> Century Museums of Memory of the Americas"

Yuki Miyamoto, "The Ethics of Commemoration: Nanjing, Hiroshima, Yakusuni"

Lana Lin, "Reparative Objects in the Freudian Archives"

## **Week 11—November 12**

### **Monuments Must Fall: Debates over Memory, Race, and Slavery**

Reading:

Marita Sturken, “The Memory of Racial Terror”

Nicholas Mirzoeff, “Why It’s Right that the Roosevelt Statue Come Down”

Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (excerpts)

Cheryl Finley “Authenticating Dungeons, Whitewashing Castles: The Former Sites of Slave Trade on the Ghanian Coast”

Monuments Must Fall

[http://www.allmonumentsmustfall.com/?fbclid=IwAR0aBklIzeaZ6SZvU-o40QRScJZmq\\_Kc\\_QBqhsFFaiKy6-6UMOPd2XCybEq](http://www.allmonumentsmustfall.com/?fbclid=IwAR0aBklIzeaZ6SZvU-o40QRScJZmq_Kc_QBqhsFFaiKy6-6UMOPd2XCybEq)

Eric Foner, “Confederate Statues and ‘Our’ History”

Mitch Landrieu, Speech on Removal of Confederate Monuments from New Orleans

Carol Becker, “Kara Walker: The Memory of Sugar”

New York Times, Reconsidering the Past, One Statue at a Time

## **Week 12—November 19**

### **Memory and Human Rights, Memory Activism**

Reading:

Adam Rosenblatt, “Aparición con vida: Disappearance and the Politics of the Counterfactual from Argentina to Ayotzinapa”

Mark Ungar and Katherine Hite, “The Arc of Human Rights”

Diana Taylor “Trapped in Bad Scripts: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo” from

*Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina’s ‘Dirty War.’*

Diana Taylor, “Traumatic Memes”

Andreas Huyssen, “International Human Rights and the Politics of Memory”

Katherine Hite and Manuela Badilla, “Memorializing in Movement: Chilean Sites of Memory as Spaces of Activism and Imagination”

Meltem Ahiska, “Memory as Encounter: The Saturday Mothers in Turkey”

Diana Taylor, “You Are Here: HIJOS and the DNA of Performance” From *The Archive and the Repertoire*

## **Week of November 26, no class, Thanksgiving**

## **Week 13—December 3**

### **The Historical Graphic Novel and the Historical Musical**

Reading:

Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*

Joe Sacco, *Palestine*

Hillary Chute and Art Spiegelman, “Why Comics?” from *MetaMaus*

Marianne Hirsch, “Mourning and Post-Memory”

Group of articles on *Hamilton*

**Week 14—December 10**

**Memory Tourism and Nostalgia**

Reading:

Viet Nguyen, “Just Forgetting”

Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (excerpt)

Jonathan Bach, “The Taste Remains”

Marita Sturken, “Pilgrimages, Reenactment, and Souvenirs”

Laurie Beth Clark, “Ethical Spaces: Ethics and Propriety in Trauma Tourism”

***Final Papers Due December 17***